



Ocean paintings highlight environmental pollution

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Editor-in-Chief

Following her 20-year project of sailing across the world and painting every ocean, Danielle Eubank, artist and adjunct professor of communications, is exhibiting “One Artist Five Oceans” at Santa Ana College, now through April 7.

Eubank’s work addresses environmental issues in the form of abstract oil paintings that depict each ocean and the pollution in them, some painted on linen and others on wooden boards.

“After I had painted two oceans, it gave me a bigger perspective about the planet, and how big it is,” Eubank said. “I started to think about the geography quite a lot more and that’s when I decided to paint all of the oceans.”

All of the pieces used abstract figures to represent oil or pollution in some way, some more than others, similar to the idea that some oceans are more polluted than others.

Some of Eubank’s paintings illustrated the water in colors other than the typical blue and instead used colors like red, green and orange.

“Southern Ocean XIX,” one of the largest paintings, took over an entire gallery wall space and featured gradients of blue with black and gray abstract shapes that resembled oil moving with the movement of the ocean.

Another piece, “Waterlow III,” instead reimagined the ocean using shades of black and white. The white oil-like figures covered most of the painting with hints of black peeking through.

“I saw a lot of plastic. Everywhere I went, every single place I’ve ever been, there’s been pollution including the Arctic and Antarctica,” Eubank said. “They don’t ever break down and what a lot of people don’t realize is that when they’re in a salty environment, it prohibits them from breaking down even further. They’ll last for nearly forever.”

Rain or shine, Eubank sailed and painted through all types of different weather conditions. She said she experienced beautiful, warm weather while sailing the Indian Ocean, but was hit with hard winds and rain when sailing the Mediterranean Sea.

Eubank said despite the ocean’s enormous size and unpredictability, she never doubted her safety.

“I have a very healthy respect for the ocean,” Eubank said. “I know that it’s a lot bigger than I am and a lot more powerful than I am, but I never had any doubt about the boats or how we were sailing or about the organization that I was sailing with.”

“Because it’s a very unusual place and it’s hard to get to, it makes the reward of getting there all the more rewarding,” Eubank said. “There’s nothing like hitting that target or achieving that goal.”

At the beginning of the exhibit reception, Eubank gave an artist talk where she explained her journey to complete “One Artist Five Oceans.”

“She’s just a pleasure to listen to because she’s so down to earth, or down to the water, I should say,” Steve Elkins, a friend of Eubank’s and fellow Explorer’s Club member, said.

Elkins said his favorite paintings were “Southern Ocean XX,” 7 x 12 inches oil on panel, and Isle of Mull III, 12 x 9 inches oil on panel, two of the physically smallest pieces in the gallery.

“I think it looks better in real life than it does when it’s digitized. The colors are much more saturated. They almost pop,” Elkins said.

Moorea Pike, senior dance major at University of California, Irvine, said she admired Eubank’s dedication to her art.

“She took great lengths to make this art and I feel like that’s inspiring,” Pike said. “To kind of see someone whose art is their life so they make it their life and traveled and sacrificed some things to make these paintings, I feel like that’s really inspiring to look up to.”

Amalie Seyffert, senior documentary film major at Chapman University, said she enjoyed the use of negative space in “Arctic V,” which was mostly white with elements of dark blue. She said absence in paintings can have as much of an impact as a busy painting.

“It’s interesting to see that merge between nature and humans, and that relationship that is less symbiotic and more parasitic in (the way) humans take from the ocean and nature in general and use it for our own gain,” Molly Steavpack, art major at Santa Ana College, said.

“One Artist Five Oceans” is on view at Santa Ana College’s main gallery in Fine Arts Building C located on 1530 W. 17th St. The gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday and Wednesday.

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Danielle Eubank, artist and adjunct professor of communications sailed across the world’s five oceans for her exhibit “One Artist Five Oceans.” The show is now on exhibit at Santa Ana College’s main gallery in Fine Arts Building C. The project, which took Eubank 20 years to complete, shines a light on environmental pollution via her abstract oil paintings. / photo by Drake Ingram